



CANVASSING KANSAS

AN UPDATE ON ELECTION NEWS IN KANSAS

Presidential Preference Primary still in works

The State of Kansas plans to participate in the presidential election sweepstakes next year with a presidential preference primary (PPP) scheduled for April 4, 2000. This will be the first PPP in Kansas since 1992, and only the third in modern history. The first was held in 1980.

The Kansas primary is open only to Democratic and Republican candidates.

Voters must be affiliated with one of those parties in order to vote in the primary.

Certain cities hold their elections on the same day as the PPP, though most cities and all local school districts hold their elections strictly in odd-numbered years.

In 1992, a number of local governmental units held special question-submitted elections the same day as the PPP. Since the state was paying for the statewide election, the local jurisdictions only had to pay for the additional expenses of their special elections.

The Secretary of State's office has already received inquiries from candidates about filing to run in the PPP. The filing fee is either \$100 or a petition containing 1,000 signatures of registered voters in Kansas. The statutory filing

See Presidential, page 6

“Making Voting Popular” program selected as 1999 NACo Achievement Award Winner

In recognition for their “Making Voting Popular” program, the counties in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area were presented the 1999 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo).

“Making Voting Popular” is a bi-state collaborative effort involving election officials in six different jurisdictions in Kansas and Missouri. The program was designed to foster a public/private partnership between election officials and the business and volunteer communities. With manpower at a premium in the greater Kansas City area, election officials often find it difficult to satisfy their human resource needs. “Making Voting Popular” was established to help officials comply with extensive election day staffing demands.

The cooperation between the six jurisdictions has provided an excellent opportunity for officials to network and share ideas. The participating jurisdictions are: Wyandotte and Johnson county election offices in Kansas and Platte, Clay and Jackson county election offices in Missouri, and the Kansas City Board of Election Commissioners.

Although the program's primary objective is to recruit election day workers, officials have been pleased with the realization of many secondary goals. These include educating the working public about the voting process, creating opportunities for individuals and organizations to commit to and meet civic responsibilities, and creating channels that can be used for other election-related outreach programs.

A list of overall benefits includes: (1) development of quality staff helping to provide quality elections, (2) heightened public awareness and trust, and (3) increased recognition, cooperation and integration between public and

See Voting, page 2

CANVASSING KANSAS

In this issue

- 2 SOS office attends conferences
- 3 A note from the Secretary
- 4 Thornburgh appoints Census Complete Count Committee
- 5 Advisory group for census adjustment appointed
- 6 Election logo may reduce mailing costs
- 7 Inactive voter registration file considered
- 8 County Election Officer News
- 9 Rahija reappointed to post SOS Reminders

SOS office attends conferences

St. Louis was the host city for the annual summer conference of the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED) and the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS).

Elections Deputy Brad Bryant attended NASED June 25-26. The major topics of discussion were voting equipment certification, preparation for next year's federal census, and using computers and the Internet to enhance office efficiency and customer service.

Most states are similar to Kansas in that no voting equipment may be used or sold without first being certified by the state election office. Equipment is becoming increasingly complex as technological advances are made.

As a result, the certification process has grown complex. Each system has hardware, software and firmware as integral parts, and any change or upgrade in any part of a voting system may require recertification.

NASED works closely with the Election Center and the Federal Election Commission to develop and apply nationwide standards to the certification process. One result of that cooperation has been the development of an independent testing authority (ITA) process, where NASED contracts with private companies to test equipment and software before it

goes to the individual states for certification. Hardware is subjected to extremes of heat, cold, humidity and other environmental factors to determine its durability. Software is subjected to rigorous tests of its ability to tabulate votes, eliminate overvotes, accommodate write-ins and other normal electoral conditions.

Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh and several staff members attended the NASS conference immediately following

NASED. Of the variety of topics discussed, two areas of interest to election officers are the New Millennium Project and the presidential preference primary system.

The New Millennium Project was discussed in

the June 1999 edition of this newsletter. Basically, NASS commissioned a study in October 1998 which revealed 18 to 24-year-olds in the United States not only vote in lower percentages than other age groups, but have overall lower levels of traditional civic involvement, such as participation in political activities other than voting and membership in civic organizations. NASS has used the results of the study to propose a program to educate youths early in

The New Millennium Project and the presidential preference primary system are of particular interest to election officers.

See Conference, page 9

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Voting

continued from page 1

private civic organizations.

NACo first presented the Achievement Award in 1970 as an effort to recognize innovative county government programs. NACo's membership now includes over 1,800 counties nationwide. Congratulations to the Johnson and Wyandotte County Election Offices on a job well done.



RON THORNBURGH
Kansas Secretary of State

Dear Friends:

In late June, I had the opportunity to attend the National Association of Secretaries of State summer conference in St. Louis. One outcome, which I am very excited about, is the advancement of the New Millennium Project. The New Millennium Project is a study that delves into finding the reasons why our youth do not vote and is developing strategies to combat this problem.

Several months ago, I was named national co-chair of the New Millennium Project Task Force and was given the responsibility of presenting an action plan at the NASS summer conference. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our office, the presentation went very well. And, I am glad to inform you that the plan was unanimously endorsed by NASS. NASS even pledged to spend \$100,000 on the implementation of the next phase of this project.

The next part of the New Millennium Project Task Force involves hiring an executive director. The director will oversee the coordination of the task force, as well as find backers and donors for the project. I think Plato expressed my feelings on this project when he wrote, "The beginning is the most important part of the work." We are still in the beginning stages and the decisions made now can critically impact the future.

I feel very strongly about developing this project. Currently, there is an increase in political apathy among the 18 to 24-year-old age group. It is my hope that this trend is terminated before it affects any more of our young people. It is also my hope that the youth of today can be shown and taught the importance of political involvement—that one person can make a difference. As this project evolves, I will continue to give updates on the advancements being made.

Sincerely,

RON THORNBURGH
Secretary of State

Census activities in full swing

Thornburgh appoints Census Complete Count Committee

The United States Bureau of the Census requests each state's governor to appoint a liaison to represent the state in its dealings with the Bureau and to coordinate census activities. Governor Bill Graves appointed Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh as Kansas' liaison in 1997.

One of the main responsibilities of the liaison is to organize a state-level Complete Count Committee. Secretary Thornburgh has appointed a CCC to meet several times this fall to design a plan to promote the census, encourage strong citizen response, and focus efforts on achieving a complete count in geographic areas and ethnic groups that have traditionally been undercounted.

The Kansas CCC is composed of representatives of county and city government, the legislature, the Bureau of the Census, racial and ethnic minority groups, and others

who have agreed to help identify communication channels and organizational networks to get the word out about next year's census.

The CCC held its first meetings July 8 and Aug. 26 at the Capitol in Topeka. Each member has

The CCC will meet several times this fall to design a plan to promote the census...

discussed the efforts of the CCC with the member's organization and submitted ideas for promoting the census. In general, the plan of the CCC is to use a series of drop-in articles in organization newsletters, public appearances and speeches at various events to disseminate general information about the census. Also, the group plans to

distribute materials at the Secretary of State's booth at the state fair as well as other booths at county fairs. The CCC plans to use its representative organizations to help recruit census workers, especially bilingual individuals. Additionally, they plan to emphasize the confidentiality of census records to alleviate some citizens' concerns about the misuse of information by other groups or governmental organizations.

The Kansas State Library and Data Center held a meeting in Salina July 27 at which representatives of local units of government were apprised of the census and informed of various census-related activities in the state. An emphasis of the meeting was how the census affects local government and how governmental units can get involved to ensure a

See CCC, page 6

Complete Count Committee Members

William Reid, representing Robert Kelly of the Association of Independent Colleges

Diane Owen, representing Dr. Andy Tompkins of the Kansas Department of Education

Tina DeLaRosa, representing the Kansas Advisory Committee on Hispanic Affairs

Julius Williams, representing the Kansas African-American Advisory Committee

Harriet Lange, representing the Kansas Association of Broadcasters

Donald Proffitt, representing the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association

Janet McPherson, representing Gary

Sherrer of the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing

Patsy Samson, representing Thelma Hunter Gordon of the Kansas Department on Aging

Cindy O'Neal, representing Rep. Michael O'Neal of the Kansas House of Representatives

Kelly Mohler, representing David Furnas of the Kansas Press Association
Sen. Janice Hardenburger, representing the Kansas Senate

Troy Scroggins, representing Louisa Fletcher of the Kansas State Conference NAACP

Nancy Sargent, representing Robert Harder of the League of Women Voters

Mary Galligan, representing Ben Barrett

of the Legislative Research Department

Ron Green, representing Governor Bill Graves

Edmore Green, representing Gary Bahr of the Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri

Dyogga Adegboro, representing the Kansas Board of Regents

Mary Neil, representing the U.S. Bureau of the Census

Henry Palacios, representing the U.S. Bureau of the Census

Kansas Sen. Chris Steineger, representing Rep. Dennis Moore, U.S. House of Representatives

Emily Wellman, representing Sen. Sam Brownback, U.S. Senate

Nancy Daniels, representing the United Way

Census activities in full swing

Advisory group for census adjustment appointed

The Secretary of State is given several responsibilities when it comes to dealing with the federal census.

One of those duties is a state law requiring the Secretary of State to adjust federal census population figures in preparation for the redrawing of state legislative district lines.

Secretary Ron Thornburgh appointed a Census Adjustment Advisory Group. The first meeting of the group was August 4 at the State Capitol in Topeka.

Thornburgh charged the Advisory Group with the following tasks:

- Design questionnaires to elicit the necessary information from

college students and military personnel.

- Recommend procedures for distributing and collecting the questionnaires, working through the administrative structures at the various institutions.

- Review proposed procedures for processing and reporting the adjusted data to the legislature in preparation for the redistricting effort in 2002.

Thornburgh and his staff presented the Advisory Group with a brief history of the census in Kansas, background on the census adjustment project and plans for

See Advisory, page 7

Census amendment fails

A proposed constitutional amendment that would have allowed Kansas voters to decide if the census adjustment mandated by the Kansas Constitution should remain was defeated by the legislature this session. This proposed amendment, Senate Concurrent Resolution 1601, was proposed by the Legislative Redistricting Advisory Group.

The Kansas Constitution requires college students and military personnel to be counted at their permanent residences. The federal census does not do this. It counts people where it finds them and does not attempt to reconfigure their places of permanent residence in census

tabulation. The policy in Kansas, stated in Article 10, Section 1 of the Kansas Constitution, requires a mini-census to be conducted to determine where such individuals consider home. Then, those who claim permanent residence at a place other than their apartment, dormitory or military barracks are subtracted from the census block where they were counted by the federal census. From there, they are added into the block elsewhere in the state where they claim residence. Some do not claim residence in Kansas and they are merely subtracted from the census

See Amendment, page 7

Members of the Advisory Group are:

Jennifer Wentz, chair, Census Adjustment Advisory Group

Ockert Fourie, representing the City of Manhattan

Deena Hallacy, representing the City of Pittsburg

The Honorable Joan Wagnon, representing the City of Topeka

Nancy Wilson, representing Douglas County

The Honorable Rich Vargo, representing Riley County

Joleen Campbell, representing Riley County

Deputy Garrison Commander Helen Gough, representing Fort Riley

Captain Darlene Hudson, representing McConnell Air Force Base

William Reid, representing the Kansas Independent College Association

Dr. Donald Adamchak, representing the Kansas Board of Regents

Marvin Burris, representing the Kansas Board of Regents

Korb Maxwell, representing the Student Advisory Commission

The Honorable Lana Oleen, representing the Kansas State Senate

Kim Gulley, representing the League of Kansas Municipalities

Mary Galligan, representing the Legislative Research Department

Freda Tapedo, representing Haskell Indian Nations University

Election logo may reduce mailing costs

Legislation passed by the 1999 Kansas Legislature can help county election officers save some money on their official election mailings. The summary of new legislation in the June 1999 issue of this newsletter briefly mentioned provisions of Senate Bill 230 that provide this opportunity.

Several organizations in the nationwide community of election officials worked several years to develop an official election logo sanctioned by the U.S. Postal Service to create a special classification of postage. This is reportedly the first time in history the Postal Service has authorized the use of such a logo. The Postal Service distributed instructional kits to thousands of election officials nationwide. They also conducted a series of training sessions in various cities.

The logo is intended to be used only on official election mailings. It creates the possibility of receiving

first-class mail service without paying first-class postage rates. Mail sent using the logo must meet other requirements, such as size and minimum number of mail pieces.

Some county election officers in Kansas have already begun to use the logo on advance ballot envelopes, federal service ballot envelopes, mail ballots, confirmation mailings and notices of disposition. Even if the mailing does not qualify for special rates because it is under the 200-piece minimum, using the logo should guarantee priority handling of the mail.

Preparations for the 2000 election year in the Secretary of State's office include plans to print the logo on various sizes of envelopes, many of which are sent to county election officers. Anyone who has not yet had the logo printed on their envelopes is encouraged to consider doing so. If any county election officers need more information, they may call the Secretary of State's office.

Preparations for the 2000 election year in the Secretary of State's office include plans to print the logo on various sizes of envelopes.

Presidential Preference Primary

Continued from page 1

deadline is noon Feb. 12, but filings will be accepted until noon Tuesday, Feb. 14, because the deadline falls on a weekend.

The PPP is funded through an appropriation by the legislature to the Secretary of State, who reimburses counties for their expenses in conducting the election. A small amount of the appropriation is kept by the Secretary of State to cover the cost of publishing notices of the election in newspapers in every county.

In 1999, the Secretary of State made a budget request of \$1,575,000 to fund the PPP, based on cost estimates received from county election officers. As of the

adjournment of the 1999 legislative session, the appropriation had not been approved, but an attempt will be made to secure funding early in the 2000 session.

There was a bill introduced in the 1999 session, House Bill 2366, that would repeal the PPP laws and thereby cancel the election permanently. It did not pass in 1999, but bills are carried over to next year, so it is possible it could be reconsidered.

The Secretary of State's office intends to proceed with plans to fulfill the laws currently on the books by conducting the PPP next April and to work with the legislature to secure funding. County election officers will be kept apprised of developments as they occur.

CCC

Continued from page 4

complete and accurate count. Bryan Caskey of the Secretary of State's office attended the meeting to report on CCC activities and to encourage participation by those present.

The CCC is attempting to expand its coverage to include other groups that are interested in making a difference. Anyone who represents an organization willing to be involved at the county or local level is encouraged to contact the Secretary of State's office or a CCC member with their ideas.

Inactive voter registration file considered

The Secretary of State's office has raised the issue of using an inactive designation for the statewide voter registration database. This topic has been discussed at several meetings with county election officers, and it has become clear that some counties already use an inactive designation.

Many jurisdictions across the nation began using the inactive designation in 1995 and 1996 with the implementation of the National Voter Registration Act. The NVRA requires election officers to mail confirmation notices to voters whose addresses may have changed and who have not voted or otherwise contacted the election office to update their records. In cases where the apparent move was out of the county, the voter's name is purged if the voter fails to

respond to the confirmation mailing and fails to vote in the next two consecutive general elections.

Election officers have the option under the NVRA of designating such voters as inactive. Being inactive does not mean the person loses the right to vote. If an

Many jurisdictions across the nation began using the inactive designation in 1995 and 1996.

inactive voter shows up at the poll on election day, he/she may vote a provisional ballot by completing a new voter registration application card indicating the new address. This would remove the voter's inactive designation.

One advantage of using an

inactive designation is that customers who purchase voter registration data could opt to buy only the active list, thereby cutting their mailing costs and possibly reducing the number of mail pieces returned undeliverable. It is possible that election officers could shorten their poll books by not including inactives on the list that goes to the poll on election day. Also, it is possible that inactives would not need to be sent some mailings from the election office, thereby saving postage costs.

Because some counties already use inactive lists, the concept is worth considering for statewide implementation. The Secretary of State's office is interested in hearing comments anyone might have about the pros and cons of such a system.

Advisory

Continued from page 5

the 2000 adjustment. Members were asked to review the material and return to the next meeting with specific recommendations.

Additional duties of the Secretary of State for the federal

Amendment

Continued from page 5

block where they were found.

Kansas is the only state that adjusts the federal census figures provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. These adjusted figures are only allowed to be used for the reapportionment of state

census also include acting as the state's liaison with the Bureau of the Census. This led to the appointment of the Complete Count Committee (see page 4).

The Secretary also is responsible for keeping the census maps up to date. This means

senate and representative districts. No other purpose is permitted.

The Secretary of State's office supported SCR 1601 and conducted extensive educational and lobbying efforts in trying to pass the resolution, and thus, allowing the amendment to go before the voters of Kansas. The

tracking all of the annexations and other changes in political boundaries, as well as precinct boundaries (or in census terms, voting districts), for which the Secretary of State relies heavily on the county election officers to supply the necessary information.

resolution passed the Senate in early February. The House of Representatives debated the resolution in mid-February. However, state representatives failed to pass the resolution with the required two-thirds majority. Having failed, the resolution died.

COUNTY ELECTION OFFICER NEWS

Two longtime county clerks plan retirements

The Secretary of State's office has been notified by two long-serving county clerks of their plans to retire in the coming months. They are Rosalie Seemann and Suwayne Williams.

Rosalie Seemann, Thomas County clerk, plans to retire October 1. At retirement, Rosalie will have nearly 25 years experience in the county clerk's office, having been elected in November 1974.

Seemann reports that her first priority upon retirement is to rest for a few days. Then, she has about 20 years worth of projects planned, including genealogy, woodworking, making memory quilts for her 11 grandchildren and redoing her flower beds. She's doing all of this while attending basketball games and other sporting events her grandchildren are involved in.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my

years as county clerk and election officer, and I know I will miss the people I have been associated with through the years, but I won't miss the hectic deadlines," Seemann said.

Suwayne Williams, Haskell County clerk, has indicated her plan to retire Jan. 31, 2000.

"...I know I will miss the people I have been associated with through the years, but I won't miss the hectic deadlines."

—Rosalie Seemann,
Thomas County Clerk

Williams will have been county clerk for 27 years. She was working in the treasurer's office when the previous county clerk passed away. Williams was appointed to fill that vacancy.

Her plans after retirement are not complicated, at least not yet—she wants to stay home during the

day, see her grandchildren more, attend their ball games and possibly travel a little. Williams' thoughts leading to her retirement are similar to Rosalie Seemann's: She has met a lot of nice people through the years in her job, especially her fellow county clerks. She considers many of them her close friends, and she knows she'll miss them.

The retirements of Seemann and Williams represent the loss of many years of experience and service to Kansas counties. County government and the administration of elections in Kansas will not be the same without them. The Secretary of State's office wishes them many years of good health and happiness in retirement.

Any election year brings the possibility of retirements. If there are others who are not planning to run next year, the Secretary of State would appreciate knowing about them.

• New Gove County clerk

Julie Hawkey is the new Gove County clerk. She replaces Bill Beougher who retired July 1. Hawkey began working in the clerk's office in 1983 as a part-time employee and then as a full-time employee since 1985. She was a deputy clerk under Beougher.

"The job has changed a little. Bill served as both the county appraiser and county clerk. Since

his retirement the clerk's position and the appraiser's position have been split," Hawkey said.

The new deputy clerk under Hawkey is Candy Getz.

• Peggy Franken has baby

Doniphan County Clerk Peggy Franken gave birth to Tyler James Franken May 14. Tyler weighed six pounds and was 19 1/2 inches long. Tyler has two siblings: Nolan, 12, and Whitney,

11. Peggy and her husband, Tim, are delighted to have their new arrival at their home in Troy. Congratulations!

• May Hull marries

Butler County Clerk May Hull was married July 4 to Bill Walker, the fire chief for Butler County Fire District #1. All of their children are grown, but Hull did gain three grandchildren. Congratulations!

COUNTY ELECTION OFFICER NEWS

Pat Rahija reappointed to election commissioner post

Pat Rahija was reappointed election commissioner for Wyandotte County by Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh at a reception in her honor July 7. Secretary Thornburgh praised the work and dedication of Rahija during her first term of office.

Rahija spoke generously of her reappointment: "I want to thank Ron Thornburgh for his continued

confidence in me and my staff by this reappointment. I look forward to continuing the progress that we have made thus far. I would also like to thank the Secretary of State's office staff for providing invaluable assistance on election matters when I have needed it."

A few of the major projects she has accomplished in her first term include the purchase of new voting

equipment for the entire county and conducting the election for the consolidation of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas government. Rahija is currently in the process of establishing a new stand-alone voter registration system that will change the way voter registration is tracked in Wyandotte County.

SOS gives reminders for county election officers

The SOS office would like to remind county election officers of the following:

1) The central voter registration duplicate name search results should be given to the SOS, if you have not already sent them. In June, each county was sent a printout of the results of the computer check of the statewide voter file. Along with the printouts, there was a brief form asking how many names were removed from the county's voter file as a result of the program.

2) Also in June, the results of the annual National Change of Address program were sent to each county. Each county should have mailed confirmation notices to voters whose addresses apparently changed based on the comparison of the Postal Service's NCOA file and the statewide voter file. Because the National Voter Registration Act does not allow the removal of a voter's name in many instances unless the voter fails to respond to the confirmation notice and fails to vote in two subsequent

elections, it is imperative that the confirmation notices be sent out so inactive voters can be removed after each election.

3) In August, forms were sent for each county to report the number of registered voters and the number affiliated with each party in each precinct. If the county election office has not certified that information, please do so, as the SOS needs it in order to compute the candidate petition requirements for next year.

Conference

Continued from page 2

their lives to establish connections with societal institutions and thus encourage involvement. The NASS program would form a temporary organization to raise funds and develop ways to more effectively teach an appreciation of civic involvement in the schools.

The other area of interest was on the subject of the presidential

preference primary system. Several years ago, NASS members came to the conclusion that the presidential nomination process needed a tune-up, if not an outright overhaul. States have moved their primaries earlier and earlier in the rush to be in the national spotlight and increase their influence in presidential politics. This process, known as frontloading, results in many states having their primaries in February and early March. By the time the later primaries are held,

the races for the major party nominations are often over.

NASS has proposed a system of rotating regional primaries, where the country would be divided into four or more geographic regions. In each presidential election year, the regions would take turns being the first to hold their regional primaries. This system is not in place for 2000, and it will take the support of the major parties and a majority of states to bring about changes of this magnitude.